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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT REMOVED FROM PARA. 4)

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EMIN](#) [BE](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DRC PRESIDENT KABILA'S VISIT TO BELGIUM --  
MILITARY PRESSURE IN EAST TO CONTINUE AS WAY TO PRESS  
REBELS BACK TO NEGOTIATING TABLE

Classified By: Political Counselor Ted Andrews, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[11](#). (C) Summary: DRC President Kabila told the Belgian leadership on September 24 that he would continue his military build up in North Kivu as a means of pressing the Nkunda forces to the bargaining table. He added that he would soon organize a reconciliation conference in Eastern Congo involving "all social elements;" foreign observers would be welcome. The Belgian side announced plans to send a high-powered trade mission to the DRC before the end of the year. Belgian FM De Gucht and Kabila will meet in New York on September 26. De Gucht wants to talk about Congolese adherence to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, among other topics, Belgian MFA sources told us. End summary.

[12](#). (SBU) On September 25, 2007, Belgian MFA African Affairs Director Trouveroy and Congo Affairs Office Director Adam provided EU and U.S. diplomats with a readout on President Kabila's brief visit to Belgium. Trouveroy went out of his way to pooh-pooh press speculation suggesting that the numerous last minute hiccoughs involved with the Kabila trip were major problems. According to the Belgians, the scheduling issues were simple matters of time and space and not indications of bilateral difficulties. The informal, ad hoc nature of the visit was in fact a boon for the Belgians, Trouveroy said. Given the continuing negotiations over formation of a new Belgian government, a visit that was neither a state visit, nor an official visit actually resolved numerous protocol questions.

[13](#). (U) The major business session took place over a working breakfast on September 24 between President Kabila and his delegation and a Belgian delegation including PM Verhofstadt, FM De Gucht, Defense Minister Flahaut, and Development Cooperation Minister Laurelle. The two sides had an ambitious agenda, but in the end discussed only a few topics -- Eastern Congo, demarcating the border between the DRC/Uganda, and trade questions.

[14](#). (C) Kabila made three points about the East. He said he would continue the current military build up to maintain pressure on the Nkunda forces in North Kivu. A similar tactic had reduced tensions in South Kivu and Ituri, Kabila reportedly argued. The DRC intended also to continue refugee return negotiations with Uganda and Rwanda. Last, Kabila said he would organize a reconciliation conference involving a broad segment of society in Eastern Congo. The Belgian side indicated a willingness to be helpful with organizing the conference, and issued a caution on avoiding military action. Kabila confirmed that diplomatic observers would be welcome at the conference. The Belgian government also promised to look for ways to facilitate refugee return efforts

being undertaken by UNHCR, and urged the DRC leadership to "get on with" the holding of local polls.

¶5. (U) The DRC declined a Belgian offer to participate in border discussions between the DRC and Uganda. (Evidently, the meeting never got around to discussing Angola.) Nonetheless, Belgian experts will help organize a meeting in Brussels to which DRC and regional representatives would gain access to colonial-era maps from Belgium and the UK.

¶6. (C) As evidenced by local press reporting, trade issues were a major subject. Trouveroy belittled the emphasis given to this subject, arguing that the Belgian government had no special concerns about the recently signed DRC deal with the PRC. Neither Chinese nor Indian traders anxious to buy Congolese natural resources were "bogeymen" to the Belgian authorities, Trouveroy claimed. To underscore continued Belgian interest in helping to develop the economy of Central Africa, the two sides spent a considerable amount of time discussing business questions. The discussions resulted in an announcement that Belgium's MFA would organize a large-scale trade mission before the end of the year, including participation by the Ministers of Development Cooperation and Energy.

¶7. (C) Belgian FM De Gucht and President Kabila intend to meet in New York on September 26, Adam said. The Belgian side hoped to discuss Congolese adherence to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. De Gucht also planned to chair a session of the P3 2 on DRC issues. Fox

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